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NEWS

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No. 7

U. S. Department of Agriculture

SCS EMPLOYEE LEAVES TO AID IN VENEZUELAN FARM PROBLEM

With the movement of Naval Reservemen to the Panama Canal Zone, attention focuses again on that vital link in our defense. If an enemy acquires a base from which he can threaten the Canal, he holds a knife at our jugular vein, since damage to the Canal would isolate our navy in one ocean, leaving the other shores of the United States virtually unprotected. That is very clear to all of us.

But we may be prone to overlook the fact that economics are as important as military strategy in hemisphere defense. War today is "total war". Aggressor nations no longer rely on military force alone to invade their victims. Economic invasion provides an effective means of paving the way to political control and subsequent military action, as events of the last year in Europe have amply demonstrated.

The American Republics as a whole are faced with tremendous economic problems that offer tempting opportunities to the Axis. Producing principally foodstuffs, the countries of South and Central America must normally send large exports to the manufacturing centers of Europe as well as

(Continued on page 2)

On leave of absence, A. G. Sandoval of Region 8 is cooperating with the Venezuelan government in developing an adequate agriculture in the eastern part of Venezuela. He is employed by the Mene Grande Oil Company, a subsidiary of the Gulf Oil Co., to produce food for the many people who have flocked to the eastern part of the country because of the recent oil boom.

Mr. Sandoval was granted leave of absence last year to set up a general agriculture and livestock project for the oil company near its headquarters at San Tome; so successful was his work, the Mene Grande management has requested a second leave of absence for Mr. Sandoval.

Before the oil company began its agricultural and livestock development, it had to import 75 percent of all foodstuffs for its workers. Farming in Venezuela had previously been restricted largely to the western part of the country which is the center of earlier developments.

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The USDA 1940 Yearbook, "Farmers In a Changing World," fifth in a series of survey volumes covering broad fields of related sciences, is devoted to the social sciences as they relate to agriculture and the farm.

U. S. Dept. of Agrl.
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WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT
(Continued from page 1)

to the United States. The British blockade has now closed the door to the markets of the continent, while German submarines and airplanes are doing their best to smash the lines of trade to Britain.

The other American Republics would gladly expand trade with the United States -- buy more of our manufactured goods, if we would only accept more of the products they have to offer, or can offer in the future. Here is the key to the problem. We eat about as many bananas as we can, and drink about all the coffee we can. We can hardly consume more of this type of product -- and as for cotton, corn, and wheat, we produce more than we can use ourselves.

Four principal efforts are now being made to untangle this knotty problem. The first is to extend loans to the American Republics to help them tide over the bad times they are now suffering. If some help of this sort is not forthcoming, there is danger that out of sheer desperation some of our good neighbors will have no alternative but to turn to the Axis powers for help -- if the British control of the seas is broken.

Secondly, we are promoting more orderly marketing of the products from South and Central America that come to the United States so that ruinous competition will be avoided. For example, recently, all the important coffee exporting countries signed an agreement that allotted to each a specific portion of all coffee that would be imported into the United States.

Thirdly, the United States is helping the nations to the south develop products that will not compete with raw materials already produced here. These include crude rubber; cinchona bark from which quinine is made; abaca or manila fiber, valuable in the manufacture of naval cordage; rotenone-bearing plants for insecti-

cides; kapok, useful for insulation and other purposes; cocoa; camphor and tea. United States imports of these eight products amounted to \$236,000,000 in 1939, of which only 7 percent came from Latin America. The sale of these products in the United States also would provide our hemisphere neighbors with the exchange they need in order to buy our goods.

Finally, we are helping other American Republics to develop both light and heavy industries that will provide goods formerly imported into this hemisphere from Europe. A recent loan to Brazil, for example, is making possible the establishment of a steel plant to produce light steel articles such as were usually purchased by South America from European sources. In the field of light industry, the manufacture of certain articles such as glassware, etc. is being encouraged to replace European supplies from which they have been cut off by the war.

Behind all this emphasis on trade relations, of course, lies a great effort on the part of the American Republics to promote better mutual understanding among all the people of this hemisphere. Through press, radio, motion pictures, exchange of students, travel assistance, and many avenues, we of the USA and our neighbors south of the border are becoming better acquainted. On the other hand, Germany, Italy and Japan are all making extreme efforts to build up appreciation of the dictator's way of doing things. Our democracy has to meet their challenge.

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Successful Farming, December, says that grain sorghums grown on contour-farmed areas in the Winner-Dixon Soil Conservation area in South Dakota produced an average of 33 percent more than those grown under similar conditions by ordinary farming methods. The only difference in treatment between the two areas was that one was listed on the contour, while the other was listed up and down the slopes.

HERE ARE SOME FACTS ABOUT OUR ROOKIE CCC ENROLLEES

What is the average CCC enrollee like when he is first assigned to one of the 391 CCC camps engaged in soil conservation work?

According to the report on the October selection, compiled by W. Frank Persons, Special Assistant to the CCC Director, he is probably slightly more than 17 years old, has probably finished the eighth grade, and has had little or no previous employment.

Of particular interest to the Soil Conservation Service is the fact that almost 39 percent of the rookie enrollees came from farm homes, and an additional 19 percent came from towns of less than 2,500. More were enrolled from farm homes than from cities or small towns in the case of 36 states, ranging downward from Mississippi where 83 percent of the new enrollees came from farm families. About one-third of all the farm boys came from owner-operated farms.

The report also shows that 48 percent of the families of the entire group are either on relief or are eligible for assistance, and that 45 percent more are below an adequate standard of living.

In terms of education, less than 1 percent have been enrolled in college, about 10½ percent graduated from high school, and 63½ percent from grammar school. Approximately 21 percent had never attended school.

Nearly 43 percent of the new group were 17 years old, and 91 percent were less than 21, the draft age. Three-fourths had never held a regular paid job.

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One in every four farm families now lives in a soil conservation district.

1940 CENSUS FIGURES SHOW RURAL POPULATION INCREASE

Over 2 million more people were seeking support from the land in 1940 than in 1930, according to preliminary releases of the 1940 Census.

While the Great Plains and Dust Bowl areas have suffered large population decreases, the people of those States have migrated to the east and west and have added to the rural population of other States. The cities have absorbed little of the migrant population.

According to Census figures, the rate of increase outside of cities of 10,000, 8 percent, was much more rapid than the increase within these cities. The largest increases in actual numbers were in the suburban regions of the upper Atlantic Coast and Great Lakes. The most rapid rates of increase, however, were in rural industrial or predominantly farming areas. The good commercial farming areas of the Old Plantation South, the Corn Belt, and the Dairy regions have remained practically stationary.

The piling up of rural population during the depression is attributed to higher farm birth rates, failure to migrate to cities as usual, and, in some regions, an actual back-to-the-farm movement.

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Agricultural aspects of the Good Neighbor Policy in respect to the Latin American Republics is discussed in a pamphlet published by the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. The title is "More Trade with Latin America: The Key to Hemisphere Solidarity." It discusses the principal agricultural products we now import from Latin America, proposed methods to increase trade, and means of stimulating complementary or noncompetitive products in Latin America. Copies are available on request through the regular publication channels.

MORE SCS EMPLOYEES ARE GRANTED MILITARY FURLOUGH

Military training and service continues to draw from the ranks of SCS personnel. Recently the following employees have been granted military furloughs:

Washington, D. C. - Harvey C. Cluff

Region II - Frank Gaines
James W. Phillips
Sam T. Hale

Region IV - Hubert S. Layton
James R. Oppenheim
William O. Wottlin
Samuel D. Wilder
Nathan J. Schiller, Jr.

Region V - Ralph W. Hauswirth
Orpheus S. Hokland

Region VI - William Calvin Berlin, Jr.

Region VII - Homer Leith

Region VIII - James B. Goodwin

Region IX - Elmer D. Hunter
James L. Robinson

Region X - Francis J. Hedeon

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The Illinois Society of Engineers has invited C. E. Ramser, Chief of the Hydrologic Division, to present a paper on their annual program to be held in Chicago the last part of January. Mr. Ramser will appear on the program January 30. The title of his paper is "Hydrologic and Hydraulic Research Studies with Special Reference to Soil Conservation and Flood Control."

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L. M. Winsor, chief engineer for Utah, is the new president of the Utah Section of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

P. K. HOOKER WRITING HISTORY OF LU PROGRAM

Philip K. Hooker of the Project Plans Division is engaged in the preparation of a comprehensive history and report on the initiation, conduct and accomplishments of the Land Utilization Program. In connection with the report, he is assembling files of all data and official documents which pertained to the administration of the program. Assisting Mr. Hooker in the assembling of material is a committee designated by the Chief and composed of F. G. Renner, W. E. Dickson, J. L. Draxler, E. C. Buller, and C. B. McIntyre.

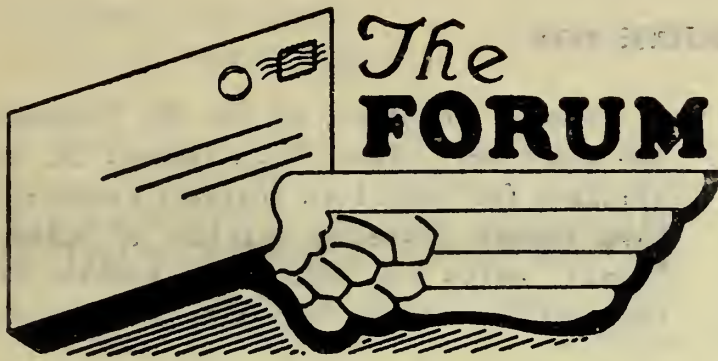
OKLAHOMA LU PROJECT HAS UNIQUE FIRE FIGHTING PLAN

A unique cooperation fire protection plan has been worked out by the Stillwater land utilization project (OK-LU-1), the Oklahoma A. and M. College, and the City of Stillwater, according to the project's annual report. A vehicle provided by SCS was equipped by the college and the City of Stillwater to serve as a firetruck in the project area. The college and the city cooperated in a fire fighting and prevention course with the fire department equipment and personnel being stationed on the campus of the college.

The cooperative fire truck and personnel first were used only in suppressing fires on the 25,000-acre project. Later, arrangements were made for the services to be extended to the rural areas of Payne County.

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"The Grasslands of the Argentine and Patagonia", by William Davies (Imperial Bureau of Pastures and Forage Crops Bulletin 30, November 1940) is a timely and interesting publication for those studying South American agriculture. It is available for loan from the Service Library.

**EDITOR, SERVICE NEWS:**

I don't like to bring this up, but--

Mr. Wellington Brink is the editor of "SOIL CONSERVATION", a monthly magazine we all have seen. It is a fine magazine, and Mr. Brink is a very fine editor, indeed. He is also a very fine fellow and I like him.

But there is one thing about Mr. Brink I think everyone ought to know.

As I say, I don't like to mention it because, after all, it is not his fault, and I certainly wouldn't say a word except that I think our folks really ought to be told. I wish somebody else would do the telling, though, because it's the kind of thing I would rather not have to talk about, as you can see. But then, I do have my responsibilities.

Of course, if Mr. Brink saw those letters, I'm sure he would tell everybody himself. But he doesn't see them because they come straight to me.

Well, anyway, to get to the point, I feel everybody in the SCS ought to know that Wellington Brink -- and mind you I'd prefer not to have to say it -- is NOT THE EDITOR OF SERVICE NEWS! Doggone it all -- I am.

Mary H. Sanders

EDITOR, SERVICE NEWS: The letter signed DDR in Service News for December 12 reminded me of an experience of this past summer.

Uri Bruning, of our regional office, and I talked with county agents, district supervisors, Farm Security Administration supervisors, vocational teachers, and just plain dirt farmers in several districts in Arkansas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia. Our purpose was to get information from persons who had actually worked with districts and seen their results which we could use in Ohio.

The most concise argument for districts which we heard on the entire trip was the statement of a farmer in the district which has its headquarters at Pocahontas, Arkansas. He said: "Since we have our district we are doing more conservation work, we are doing it better, and we are doing it quicker than we ever did before." In my opinion it was quite significant that he said "we" not the Soil Conservation Service or any other agency.

H. T. D.

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"Relative Productivity of the A Horizon of Cecil Sandy Loam and the B and C Horizons Exposed by Erosion" by Earle E. Latham appears in the December *Journal of the American Society of Agronomy*.

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Region 3 has ordered reprints of two articles which appeared in recent issues of SOIL CONSERVATION. Copies will be available of "Profitable Pastures for the Ohio Valley" by R. H. Morrish and "Five Years of Tree Planting in the Ohio Valley" by J. A. Gibbs.

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The Library has need for back issues of SOIL CONSERVATION LITERATURE: SELECTED CURRENT REFERENCES. If there are individuals who do not care to maintain files, and will send issues to the Library, it will be appreciated.

NATIONAL DEFENSE NEWS

Formation of a national defense fire-fighting corps, modeled after the famous A.R.P. that has been battling fires caused by air raids in England, has been recommended by the Fire Defense Committee of the NDAC. It is hoped that the proposed fire corps eventually will number at least ten million men, including all the regular professional fire departments and a large number of civilian recruits.

Because of its extended studies of grain dust explosions, the USDA has been selected to direct the Committee's research in fire prevention, with the dual duty of studying the causes of important fires and explosions in defense projects as they occur and devising new chemical means of combating conflagrations.

The Department also has been asked to aid in promoting organization of auxiliary fire brigades in rural districts throughout the country, especially in areas near defense factories and Army cantonments.

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To make the best use of reserve manpower, Chester C. Davis, the Agricultural Commissioner of the NDAC, has worked unceasingly for the location of new defense plants, whenever possible, in rural areas. The USDA is providing Mr. Davis and the heads of military services with information useful in locating plants in rural areas. The REA has made power available for defense plants in many rural sections.

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As the manpower of the Regular Army passed the 400,000 mark for the first time since the World War, the War Department awarded contract to two engineering firms to survey 38 new Army camps in 28 States and recommend steps to insure adequate sewage so that the growing Army would not be menaced by faulty sanitation.

Loren G. Polhamus, of the BPI Washington staff left Miami, Fla., January 10, by airplane for Brazil to initiate a cooperative rubber planting station at Belem, Brazil, which the USDA is to sponsor in cooperation with the Brazilian government.

The BPI also has decided to detail four of the rubber survey field parties to the large central cooperative at Turrialba, Costa Rica, where 100,000 rubber trees already have been planted.

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Community adjustment problems in a dozen rural districts where purchases of sites for defense projects have necessitated removing hundreds of farm families from their homes are being worked out on a cooperative basis by USDA agencies and local Land Use Planning Committees.

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The USDA has given the Navy the use of 174 acres of land, about 15 miles from Jacksonville, Fla., to serve as site for a housing project for workers near the naval air station at Jacksonville. The land, originally bought by the former Resettlement Administration for a subsistence homestead project, will be used for low-cost houses to be constructed from National Defense Housing funds.

CCC CAMPS CONTINUE TO MAKE SAFETY RECORDS

Its safety record won not one but two trophies this year for the CCC camp at Clanton, Alabama. The camp holds the best safety record among Alabama camps during the 15th camp period. It also had the best safety record of any camp in the region.

On January 1, 1941 the Beulah, Colorado Camp, SCS-2-C passed the two-year mark without a lost-time accident.

DEPARTMENT TO LAUNCH TWO NEW PUBLICATIONS

With the interest in hemispheric solidarity growing every day, one bureau with its hands full is the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations. Even so, it is just about to launch two new monthly publications on affairs with an international slant.

One will be "Agriculture in the Americas", and it is going to press late in January. Its purpose will be to interpret the agricultural problems of the Western Hemisphere nations and their relations to defense and other domestic problems confronting all of the Americas.

The other, to be called "Foreign Agriculture", will feature articles on foreign agriculture, commodity reviews and statements on international agricultural trade appearing heretofore in the weekly, "Foreign Crops and Markets."

If we may suggest, a little hemispheric reading might help to cement hemispheric solidarity. You can subscribe to these two magazines if you really want to know what goes on in your half of the world.

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N. P. Stephenson, Training Officer of Region 4, has come to Washington for the month of January in order to work with a committee on the recruiting and training of professional personnel. Other members of the committee are Leland Barrows, William X. Hull, W. R. Van Dersal, and A. E. Fivaz.

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Angus McDonald broadcast on December 26 over the National Farm and Home Hour his story of "My Father Was a Soil-BUILDER," which appeared in the December Harpers Magazine. The senior McDonald was an Oklahoma preacher who believed in saving soil as well as souls.

CONSERVATORS EXCHANGE VIEWS AT ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

"More work on the land" summed up Dr. Bennett's message to regional conservators who met in Washington, January 6 to 11, for their annual roundtable discussion. The rapid growth of the districts' movement and the ensuing demand for technical advice which has taxed the facilities of the Service to the limit occupied a major portion of the discussions.

A lengthy agenda of topics was well covered during the week. Subjects considered included the effects of personnel losses through the National Defense program, budgets, organization and classification, equipment, project planning, and cooperation with other agencies.

BAE officials met with the conservators in joint session Tuesday, January 7, to discuss ways and means of bringing about better cooperation between the two agencies in their assistance to soil conservation districts.

The meetings, originally scheduled to last one week, were extended into this week when it was found that the list of problems raised by the conservators could not be covered in the time first allotted.

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Recently published "Erosion and Related Land Use Conditions on the Mad River Watershed, Vermont" by C. H. Atkinson includes an innovation in conservation survey maps. Tipped in over an aerial photograph of Waitsfield and vicinity is a cellophane sheet on which are outlined the conservation features of the area.

On the cellophane sheet, conservation-survey boundaries are shown in brown, land use in green, drainage in blue, and cultural features in black. This effective feature results from an idea furnished by J. A. Bonsteel. Z. LaPelle of USDA Information suggested the use of cellophane for the overlay.

FIELD MEMORANDA

- 971 Responsibility for the Operation of Privately owned Vehicles. (Responsibility rests with employee who has been granted travel authorization.)
- 972 Use of Penalty Privilege. (Post Office decisions to questions re Government-franked mail posted in connections with field work.)
- 973 Erosion Control Measures Along Public Roads. (Supersedes memoranda SCS-303, 653, 653a, 653b, and 958 and summarizes material re execution of agreements for work.)
- 974 WPA Policy for Participation in Fire Fighting.
- 975 Excusing Federal Employees from Duty on December 24, 1940.
- 904-F Effect of Enlistments on Leave for Military Service. (Civilian employee who enlists may not be granted leave without pay for period of military service.)
- 904-G Military Service. A- Use of probational indefinite appointments to replace individuals in Military Service. B- Eligibility Period on Civil Service Registers. C- Retirement Status during Military Service.
- 951-A Numbering Soil Conservation Districts, Wind Erosion Districts and Grazing Districts.
- 802-B Long Distance Telephone Calls. (Form AD-102 discontinued in Washington but remains in use in field.)
- 976 Drainage and Irrigation Policies for SCS Operations and Research.

(SCS responsible for land use operations and demonstrational work involving land drainage and farm irrigation where such work is part of coordinated program of soil conservation, erosion control, and wise land use.)

- 977 Filing of Memoranda of Understanding and Working Agreement concerning Rehabilitation and Conservation Measures on and along Public Drains. (Documents should be filed in region.)

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BULLETINS IN PAGE PROOF

"Guarding a Heritage," Unnumbered Publication.

"Winona County, Minn." by Mark H. Brown and Iver J. Nygard, Erosion Survey 17.

"Illinois Bayou Soil Conservation District" by C. J. Finger, Jr., Erosion Survey 18.

"Toward Soil Security on the Northern Great Plains" by Glenn K. Rule, Farmers' Bulletin 1864.

"Wildlife Management Through Soil Conservation on Farms in the Northeast" by F. C. Edminster, Farmers' Bulletin 1868.

"A Combination Suspended-Load Sampler and Velocity Meter for Small Streams" by Alvin G. Anderson, Circular No. 599.

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"Soil Losses from Cultivated Strips in Strip-Cropped Fields in the Ohio Valley Region," Circular No. 588, by R. W. Gerdell, is now off the press and available upon request.